

REMARKS

This submission addresses the issues raised in the outstanding final Office Action. Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application for the reasons set forth below.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the allowance of Claims 2 and 5-8.

As to Claims 9-13, reconsideration of the outstanding rejection is respectfully requested.

It is noted initially that the outstanding rejection of Claim 9 states " see Claim 5 above and note the plurality of friction plates 1." Office Action at p. 2. As Claim 5 now stands allowed, the reference to Claim 5 in support of the rejection of Claim 9 is not understood. It is noted further that Fukushima's element 1 is an input case and is not a friction plate of a torque limiter which is in series with an airtight damper, as claimed in Claim 9.

Claim 9 recites a damper assembly in which, *inter alia*, a friction torque limiter is in series with an airtight damper, the friction torque limiter being provided inside the airtight damper and including a plurality of friction plates provided with wet-type friction material. Fukushima teaches a damper assembly having a torque limiter constituted by an arrangement of conical depressions and

spring biased spherical balls. Fukushima therefore does not teach or suggest Applicants' claimed arrangement wherein a friction torque limiter is arranged in series with an airtight damper and provided inside the damper, and wherein the friction torque limiter so arranged includes a plurality of friction plates provided with wet-type friction material.

The Examiner's observation regarding the claim language being at issue is duly noted. However, as will be appreciated from the foregoing explanation, the language of Claim 9, considered in its entirety, clearly distinguishes patentably from Fukushima. Claims 10-13 distinguish patentably from Fukushima in view of their dependency from Claim 9, as well as for the additional features set forth therein.

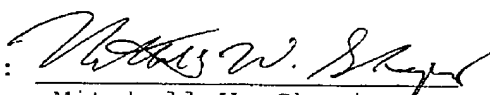
Accordingly, it is respectfully urged that the outstanding rejection be withdrawn and that this application be passed to issue.

An early Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 (XA-9598) any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing

of this paper and has not been separately requested, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

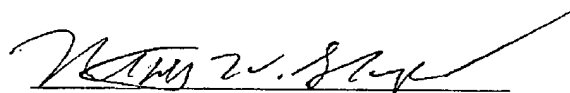
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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office on April 8, 2009.


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